

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3599

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 1244

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: CHAMBER OF MINES PRESIDENT MAKES MAJOR STATEMENTS ON
LABOR POLICY

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1093

1. ADDRESSING BLOEMFONTEIN AFRIKAANSE SAKEKAMER NOV 18, CHAMBER
PRESIDENT A.W.S. SCHUMANN MADE SEVERAL NOTEWORTHY STATEMENTS
IN CONTEXT OF OBVIOUS NEED TO PLACE GREATER RELIANCE IN
FUTURE ON DOMENSTIC SOURCES OF BLACK LABOR.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, SCHUMANN SAID INTER ALIA: (A)
THAT DESPITE WAGE INCREASES AT TIME OF SUBSTANTIAL BLACK
UNEMPLOYMENT, MINING INDUSTRY WAS SUFFERING FROM LABOR SHORTAGE
WHICH COULD BECOME MUCH WORSE IN VIEW OF MALAWIAN BAN ON
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RECRUITING AND UNCERTAINTY ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE AS RELIABLE SOURCE

OF SUPPLY. (B) THAT SAG HAD APPROVED CHAMBER'S REQUEST TO RECRUIT URBAN BLACKS IN WHITE SOUTH AFRICA FOR MINE WORK WITH UNDERSTANDING THEY WOULD BE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO URBAN PLACES OF RECRUITMENT FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF CONTRACTS RATHER THAN REQUIRED TO GO TO DESIGNATED HOMELANDS. (C) THAT CHAMBER WAS ALSO CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY OF RECRUITING RURAL BLACKS BUT WAS AWARE OF PROBABLE RURAL WHITE OPPOSITION TO THIS COURSE OF ACTION. (D) THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS AVAILABLE LABOR IN SOUTH AFRICA WOULD HAVE TO BE BETTER UTILIZED AND TREATED AND THAT IN THIS CONNECTION SAG HAD INDICATED IT WAS PREPARED TO PERMIT MINES TO PROVIDE MARRIED QUARTERS FOR MORE THAN 3 PERCENT OF THE BLACK WORKERS IF MINES REQUIRED "GREATER COMPLEMENT OF MARRIED WORKERS AND CAN AFFORD TO HOUSE THEM." (E) THAT, EVEN IF DOMESTIC RECRUITING WERE TO INCREASE DRAMATICALLY, MINES COULD FORGET ABOUT OBTAINING MORE THAN HALF OF THEIR WORKERS FROM DOMESTIC SOURCES AND WOULD HAVE TO CONTINUE TO DEPEND INDEFINITELY ON SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACK NEIGHBORS FOR SUBSTANTIAL PROPORTION OF THEIR LABOR FORCE. (F) THAT MIGRANT LABOR WOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE TO DISAPPEAR AND THAT HE DOUBTED "WHETHER WE CAN AFFORD RESTRICTIONS WHICH PREVENT THE MARKET FROM FINDING IN THE CAPITALIST FASHION ITS OWN LEVEL AND A SOUND BALANCE BETWEEN SUPPLY AND DEMAND."

3. COMMENT: IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE HOW ONE WOULD GO ABOUT SQUARING SCHUMANN'S PROJECTED CHANGES IN ALL-IMPORTANT MINING INDUSTRY WITH CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY OF "SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT". NEVERTHELESS ATTEMPT TO DO THIS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE MADE.

GUTHRIE

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